

The Role of *Kiai* Leadership in Developing Students' Character at Islamic Boarding School

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ABSTRACT

The existence and development of Islamic boarding schools are inseparable from the figure of the *kiai*, who play a central role in these institutions and serve as an intellectual actor in their movement and development. One of the main challenges faced by these madrasas is the low quality of the educational process, attributed to deficiencies in management, curriculum, and teaching staff. This study aims to determine the role of the *kiai*'s leadership in developing the Islamic boarding school in Bandung city. It seeks to understand how the *kiai*'s leadership contributes to character development and learning outcomes in the context of Bandung. The research methodology employed is qualitative, utilizing techniques such as interviews, observation, and documentation. Key informants include *kiai* and pesantren leaders, selected through snowball sampling. The data analysis process involves data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The findings reveal that the leadership style applied at the Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City is democratic and transformational. The *kiai* plays a crucial role as a supervisor, motivator, caregiver, advisor, educator, facilitator, coordinator, and role model in shaping the character of the students. The implication of this research is that optimizing the leadership role of *kiai* in Islamic boarding schools, both interpersonal, informational, and decisional roles of *kiai* in Islamic boarding schools, is important in the process of improving the character of students in Islamic boarding schools. The results of this study recommend the involvement of a *kiai* by all stakeholders in building student character.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The formation of character is of utmost importance in preparing the nation's successors to face the era of Industry 4.0 (Rohman & Muhid, 2022), where individuals are expected to be more creative and innovative (Lase, 2019). Character formation consists of elements such as knowledge, awareness, motivation, citizenship, and spirituality (Omer, 2017), making it crucial to establish and nurture character so that it becomes a habit for every individual. Character education in Islamic boarding schools

(pesantren) is acquired through a learning process that begins with the study of the Kitab Kuning (traditional Islamic texts), which is then reinforced through empowerment activities conducted by the kiai (Islamic scholars) in their daily interactions with students (*santri*) and the surrounding community (Hafidh et al., 2019). The existence of *kiai*, which is the dominant factor in The concept of *sami'na wa'atho'na* which makes students obey the *kiai*'s words to them (Hafidh, Zuhri, & Sandi, 2019).

Pesantren serves as a place for spreading Islamic teachings, education, learning, and community development (Muali, 2020). It is commonly associated with institutions that focus on the study of religious knowledge or "*ngaji*". Pesantren provides a conducive environment for shaping the character of children as they go through life. Therefore, pesantren is not only the oldest Islamic educational institution that has made significant contributions to the growth and development of Islam in Indonesia (Oktari & Kosasih, 2019), but also the catalyst for the establishment of other Islamic educational institutions in the country (Syafe'i, 2017). However, not all children in Indonesia aspire to be students or reside in pesantren, as they may perceive the institutional background as intimidating due to the activities conducted there. The overall direction of establishing, managing, and developing pesantren revolves around: 1) Independence, 2) Formation of Future Scholars, 3) the Birthplace of Young Intellectuals, and 4) Quality of Pesantren Education (Hafidh & Badrudin, 2018). Character education in pesantren heavily relies on the leadership of the kiai. The goal of character education is inseparable from the expectation that students will be able to assess the good and bad aspects of life in order to enhance their quality of living within society (Syamsuar, 2018).

The role of *kiai* in several pesantren has undergone changes. *Kiai* serves as an influential figure for every scholar who follows them (Ansori, 2021). The leadership of *Kiai* promotes values and holistic personalities that attract students and the community (Kahanna, 2021). A'yuni and Hijrawan argue that an ideal leader is someone who can guide their institution according to the prevailing conditions (Hanafi, 2021). According to Dhfier (2011), pesantren has distinct characteristics in studying *aqidah* (theology), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tasawuf* (Sufism), and other Islamic disciplines, serving as a centre for the dissemination of Islam. In some cases, leadership development begins with a shift in leadership style, transitioning from charismatic to rational, from authoritarian-paternalistic to diplomatic-participative, or from *laissez-faire* to democratic (Masyhud, 2003). Therefore, the role of kiai is crucial in various aspects of life, including spirituality, social relations, culture, and education (Romdoni & Malihah, 2020), where their role is associated with acts of worship, religious rituals, and contributing to the community in problem-solving (Noor, 2019). *Kiai*, a pesantren leader, is a unique leadership phenomenon with a strong personality, integrity, and proactivity. They must mobilize resources and management elements, form a brand image, and build trust with stakeholders, ensuring a dynamic external environment. (Buhori, Sujiarto, Nurjaman, & Khori, 2022).

The important role of *Kiai* is their contribution to how *Kiai*, as a leader, a key element, and a central figure in the pesantren, strives to preserve the survival of the pesantren they lead and strengthen the culture or traditions that have existed for centuries in the present era, ensuring that these traditions do not disappear (Aisyah et al., 2022). Therefore, *Kiai* is categorized as someone who is closely connected to the community (Ma'arif & Rusydi, 2020). The leadership of a "*kiai*" in pesantren traditionally relies on charisma. However, with the process of transformation and the emergence of various innovations in the world of pesantren, society also has high expectations for the emergence of a more rational leadership style in these institutions. This is why the influence of charismatic leadership gradually diminishes over time (Soebhar, 2013). As stated by (Syafe'i, 2017), during the transition period of the New Order regime, when economic growth increased, pesantren became more structured and the pesantren curriculum improved. As an influential figure in the pesantren and society, *Kiai* is not only tasked with transferring knowledge, but is also skilled in providing good moral examples. In pesantren, *Kiai* always directs *santri* to be on the right path and benefit their environment. Of course, *Kiai* has high expectations of good behavior from a *Santri*. The target that *Kiai* wants to achieve is to foster the morals of *Santri* to become a human being who is knowledgeable of moral and values the art of independence (Chusnul, Moh, Hasan, Zamroni, & Lukman, 2021).

In the 20th century, pesantren faced financial challenges, leading many families to enroll their children in public schools. This resulted in Muslim children lacking comprehensive knowledge of their religion, especially orphaned "*yatim piatu*." Today, there is a biased view that formal schools better cater to the needs and challenges of the time. (Wiranata, 2019). In 2006, Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi was established with a very modest place, aiming to introduce the concept of a boarding school where Islamic knowledge is studied. Its primary motivation was to prevent the loss of future generations of scholars, hence the emphasis of Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi on delving deeper into the knowledge of Allah SWT.

In Islamic boarding schools, there are three indicators of *santri* obedience: first, *santri* obedience to the implementation of dormitory activities which include praying in congregation, reciting the Qur'an, reciting the book, participating in *mujahadah/istighasah, dibaiyah, tahlilan* and compulsory study; Second, *santri* obedience to security includes permission to enter and leave the pesantren, use of clothing according to pesantren regulations, and association with the opposite sex; third, *santri* obedience to the pesantren code of ethics includes *santri* personality, manners, rights and obligations, and *takziran* (Chasanah, 2021). Therefore, Islamic religious sciences, be it the science of 'alaq such as morals, fiqh, tawhid, nahwu sharaf, to the science of Sufism. Even to study this science requires a long time. So it is appropriate for the *santri* to understand the content of these sciences so that they are able to internalize them in their daily lives. Even so, back to the personality of each *santri*, in fact, the phenomenon of breaking the rules is still carried out by the students, while they also realize that these actions are contrary to what they have learned.

Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School emphasizes ethics, good manners, and respectful behavior in its education. Students use the Amsilati method for rapid reading of yellow book texts, focusing on worship practice and behavior. As an elder institution in Indonesia, it transforms Islamic values and internalizes them through its historical roots, catering to cultural values in society (Takdir, 2018). In 2021, Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi established a junior high school (SMP) using the Amsilati method and Quranic memorization to become a role model. The school aims to produce students with noble character, a deep understanding of religion, and leadership qualities, fostering future scholars and leaders. (Chusnul et al., 2021). The school emphasizes self-cleaning and *tazkiyatun nafs*, aiming to produce children who understand religion and solve problems in a religious context.

Studies on *kiai* leadership styles in Islamic boarding schools have revealed many facets of successful leadership. Salis (2020) researched the democratic leadership style in establishing Majelis Taklim in Islamic boarding schools, whereas Muali (2021) investigated the impact of sufistic-based *kiai* leadership on creating the *Santri* character in Pesantren. Ramdani (2021) examined the contribution of *Kiai Hisyam Zuhdi* to the development of At-Taujeuh Al-Isalmy Islamic boarding school. Taufiq (2021) emphasized the significance of *kiai* leadership in overseeing Islamic boarding schools and advancing women's education. Fitriyah (2020) studied how *kiai* contribute to empowering women's education in Pesantren, emphasizing their significance in overcoming gender obstacles and promoting gender equality. The studies emphasize the significance of *kiai* leadership in advancing women's education and empowerment in the Pesantren community.

Studies reveal the diverse roles of *kiai* in the pesantren environment, including cultural mediation, worldview shaping, mentoring, leadership in education quality improvement, and women's empowerment. This research is urgent as it focuses on the role of *Kiai* leadership in developing students' character at Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi. Therefore, the research questions that the author will include are as follows; 1) How is the leadership role of *kiai* in developing the character of students carried out at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School Bandung?, 2) How do *kiai* develop the character of students through their leadership at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School Bandung?, 3) What is the leadership role of *kiai* in the educational environment at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School Bandung?.

Conducting research at Bandung's Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School, this study seeks to identify the *kiai*'s function as a character development leader. To learn more about the *kiai*'s role in

shaping students' personalities at Bandung's Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School. Examine the function of the *kiai* as a school leader at Bandung's Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School. This study aims to explore the impact of *kiai* leadership on the character development of *pesantren* students by seeking answers to the research questions posed. This research has important implications for Islamic education and can help shape effective teaching methods for *pesantren*.

2. METHODS

This research utilised a qualitative research methodology employing a case study technique. The research was carried out at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City. The qualitative case study technique is employed to comprehensively and contextually examine the leadership function of *kiai* in shaping the character of *santri*. The data to be collected will include verbal descriptions and perspectives of the persons under study (Meleong, 2007). Snowball sampling can be utilised to gather detailed information and categorise the results. Researchers gathered data on the leadership role of *kiai* in this instance. This research is sometimes referred to as a naturalistic paradigm, which involves the relationship between the researcher (human instrument) and the data source (Wajdi et al., 2022). Data collection techniques through observation are systematic and planned observations that aim to obtain the validity and reliability of controlled data (Alwasilah, 2002). Where the data collection process will involve orientation, exploration, and member check. The collected data will be analyzed through data unitization, data grouping, data validity checking, and descriptive data presentation (Moleong, 2007).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 History of Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City

Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi, established in 2006, is a boarding school that focuses on learning religious knowledge. With a small house and 10 students, the school expanded its educational program to include early childhood education, kindergarten, primary school, and secondary school. The school combines traditional Salafism with modern teaching methods, emphasizing ethics, manners, and respectful behavior. The school uses accelerated learning approaches, such as the method, to grasp subject knowledge quickly. In 2021, a senior high school program was established, which aims to produce noble character, religious understanding, and leadership qualities for future scholars and leaders.

The vision and mission of Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School are to establish it as an Islamic educational institution that cultivates morally upright students, deep religious comprehension, and leadership attributes. The tasks involve developing individuals with strong faith (*aqidah*) and noble character, establishing Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School as a model for future *pesantrens*, enhancing Islamic knowledge to attain happiness in this life and the afterlife, working towards developing students as future leaders, fostering students with Quranic spirit, Sufi character, and independence.

"Pesantren aims to shape students' character, producing strong convictions and role models, fostering leadership with Quran and Sufi character, contributing to society and bringing prosperity, reflecting KH. C S's grand vision." (W.PKK-AKM-WK. KUR.1).

Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School's education system combines Islamic knowledge with other fields, promoting a non-dichotomous approach between religion and secular knowledge. It emphasizes integrated education, personal effectiveness, and practical problem-solving skills, ensuring continuity between excellence and new traditions. The curriculum development focuses on personal growth and adaptability to various situations.

3.2 Learning Process at Islamic Boarding School

Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School follows a Salafi-oriented teaching approach, supplemented with practical methods implemented within the boarding school. It emphasizes practical and effective religious studies, such as the knowledge of *Tawhid* (monotheism) and Tasawuf (Sufism), which enlighten the hearts of the students. The boarding school also preserves the unique characteristics of pesantren education, where students are encouraged to spend more time on religious studies compared to formal education, although achieving excellence in formal education remains their ultimate goal.

The learning process of the traditional education system is namely by reading the material, translating it, and recognizing the understanding contained therein. In general learning, santri are accommodated by a complete group of organizations so that both have the opportunity to be equally achieved. The learning objectives are directed to instill Islamic character values for Santri so that a culture of tolerance and compassion for others will be created. Therefore, various activities that Santri must follow are arranged, as follows.

Table 1. Schedule of Students' Study

Time	Subjects taught	Location	Instructors	Remarks
05.00-06.00	Qur'an Memorization (Tahfidz)	Respective Study Classes	Ustadzh Acih, Ustadzh Tari, Ustadzh Lia, Ustadzh Yoga	-
	Sorogan of Kitab Kuning (Kitab Kuning Class)	Respective Study Classes	Ustadzh Nisa, Ustadzh Sulis, Ustadz Adi	-
	Sorogan of Al-Quran (Ibtida Class)	Mosque	Ustadz Khaer	-
	Book: Tanqih Al-Qaul & Daqoiqul Akbar (Saturday-Sunday)	Mosque	KH. C S (Head of Boarding School)	-
13.00 – 14.00	Jurumiyah, Imriti, Alfiyah, Qur'an Memorization	Respective Study Classes	All Ustadz & Ustadzh	-
15.30 – 17.00	Safinah, Fathul Qorib, Ghoiyatul Whusul, Tuhfatul Athfal	Respective Study Classes	All Ustadz & Ustadzh	-
18.30-19.45	Jurumiyah, Imriti, Alfiyah, Qur'an Memorization (Sunday-Wednesday)	Respective Study Classes	All Ustadz for Male Students	-
	Muhadoroh (Saturday)	Assembly Hall	All Ustadz and All Students	-
	Yasinan, Manaqib of Tuan Syekh Abdul Qodir Al-Jailani and Shalawat (Thursday)	Mosque	Kh. C S	-
	Tilawah/Mujawwaz (Monday)	Assembly Hall	Ustadz Hasyim Pajru Rohman	-
20.00-20.30	Sorogan of Kitab and Al-Quran	Respective Dormitories	All Ustadz & Ustadzh	-

Source: Curriculum Division, Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School

Islamic Boarding School Curriculum is seen as a plan of learning activities for students as a set of goals to be achieved. The meaning of the curriculum can also refer to a document that contains the formulation of objectives, teaching materials for teaching and learning activities, schedules and

evaluations (Adhar; Zaitunah, 2022). So, the curriculum can also be described as a written document as a result of mutual agreement between curriculum developers and education policy makers and the community covering a certain scope, whether a school, district, province or the whole country.

Each boarding school has a different curriculum, meaning that the books they use do not show similarities between one boarding school and another boarding school. With these conditions, a study of the orientation of Islamic Boarding school education is needed so that stagnation and exclusivity do not occur. Even in other Islamic boarding schools, learning the yellow classical books is a fundamental effort in shaping the character of a santri in understanding perfect Islam and becoming a system of life values in Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia (Farhanudin & Muhajir, 2020). Thus, Islamic boarding schools must be more sensitive to the development and demands of the community for religious needs, without having to change the essential teachings in Islam. So that, students who are in Islamic boarding schools are really given a place to carry out the learning process optimally as an effort to print the character of each student.

The increasing number of boarding students and their unique talents contribute to the curriculum's continuity. However, inhibiting factors include students mocking and demonizing their friends, reducing learning enthusiasm. Santri is mentally trained to be independent, simple, and respectful. Pondok Pesantren aims to gain community legitimacy, provide dual knowledge, and focus on skills for future social life.

3.3 Santri and santriwati at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School

Al-Khawarizmi can be considered a relatively new pesantren (Islamic boarding school), as it has been established for only around 11 years. The students who study here come from various backgrounds, mainly from the local community, including orphans and those in need. The percentage of students enrolled here is remarkably high considering the relatively short period since the pesantren's establishment. At Al-Khawarizmi, there are two types of students: resident students (*santri mukim*) and non-resident students (*santri kalong*) who commute. The percentage of resident students and commuting students is significantly disparate, mainly due to insufficient facilities and infrastructure. However, the number of students has been increasing over the years, and the facilities and infrastructure have been gradually improving.

Table 2. Number of Resident (Santri Mukim) and Non-Resident (Santri Kalong) Students

No	Category	Data for Santri/Santriwati at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School	Total Number of Students per Level
1	Santri Mukim	12	85 (SD), 35 (SMP), 35 (SMA)
2	Santri Kalong	340	70 (SD), 22 (SMP), 22 (SMA)
Total Students	352	155 (SD), 57 (SMP), 57 (SMA)	
Overall Total	-	-	564

Source: Curriculum Division, Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School

The existence of number of students of this boarding school shows a form of development from year to year, both from the number of students who live permanently or other terms (*ngalong*). This

situation shows an increase in both the quality and quantity of students in terms of output and input per year.

3.4 Assets, Facilities, and Infrastructure of Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School

Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi, led by KH. C S, has become a leading organization in the education sector, focusing on providing quality education for orphanages and the disadvantaged. The school offers complete facilities for pre-school (RA), kindergarten (TK), elementary school (SD), and junior high school (SMP). However, secondary school education still lacks adequate facilities and amenities, so Al-Khawarizmi collaborates with surrounding private schools to address this issue.

The school has been involved in basic Islamic education (*diniyah takmiliah*) since its establishment, and it offers the opportunity for orphaned children to receive a proper education and compete with their parents. The school also has facilities such as a mosque, a kindergarten building, an elementary school building, a junior high school building, a computer laboratory, dormitories, and a soup kitchen. In addition, the school also has business assets, such as a school canteen, fish farm, catering service, and aqiqah, which contribute to the school's financial sustainability and development. Despite challenges in expanding the physical infrastructure due to land limitations and high taxes in the central city location, Al-Khawarizmi has effectively run its educational program and acted as a development agent in the local community.

3.5 Institutional Management

Al-Khawarizmi Training Houses select staff based on competence and credibility, offering salaries based on education. The trainer has honorary and fixed foundation officers with a different pay system. KH. C S has a personality that can bind the Jamaah with his friendly character, full of love, care, and kindness. Whether it is among students, parents of students or Jamaah. Supendi (2016) states that *Kiai* leadership is crucial for maintaining organizational culture in pesantren. It involves selecting and socializing individuals, effectively communicating the vision, fostering commitment, and facilitating communication. *Kiai* engages with the entire community, treating them as whole individuals and valuing their caring attitude. He organizes the pesantren, creating loose relationships, and establishes a regeneration system to uphold the values and brotherhood of the community.

Kiai plays a crucial role in developing students' character in pesantren, serving as caretakers, teachers, mentors, and second parents. They also pray to God for their tasks, focusing on faith, worship, and noble character. Education in pesantren emphasizes brotherhood, obedience, exemplary behavior, simplicity, independence, freedom, sincerity, and pluralism. Teaching methods include lectures and studying classical Islamic texts, such as "Talimul Muta'allim" or "Adabul Alim Wal Muta'allim." These studies aim to instill obedience to Allah, teachers, friends, and parents, while fostering a sense of responsibility and improvement in conduct towards parents, teachers, and friends.

3.6 *Kiai's* Leadership Role in Developing the character of students at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School

KH. C S's leadership at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School exemplifies strong moral principles and participatory leadership in decision-making. Leadership necessitates technical and theoretical skills, together with adept communication with the surroundings, to guide subordinates towards objectives and triumph. The source is Yuliani from 2020. *Kiai* in pesantrens typically exert their highest power through various means, including as decision-making. However, KH. Cici stands out for his participatory approach to decision-making. The upcoming interview will delve into his participatory decision-making process.

"KH. C S is a wise leader who focuses on democratic and tawadhu leadership, involving all pesantren residents, including teachers, supervisors, and staff." (W.PKK-AKM-KH.CS.5).

This method guarantees collaborative discussion and the most valuable insights from all attendees, leading to decisions that enhance the institution. KH ensures that all pesantren residents and stakeholders are involved in the decision-making planning process. Decision-making in the institutional setting involves all pesantren residents to ensure optimal input and perspectives from various individuals. The Supervisor of Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School emphasised the importance of involving subordinates in the decision-making process.

"Pa Kiai Cici rarely makes decisions herself, focusing on determining the best solution for her students. She invites deliberations and holds meetings with principals, teachers, and staff." (W.PKK-AKM-PPP.3).

Leadership styles, according to Gibson's view, include authoritarian, paternalistic, laissez faire, and democratic styles. She often seeks input from all participants and accommodates the best views. (Kartono, 2006) but this problem is focused on one discussion, namely the paternalistic leadership style. The paternalistic leadership style is a style that at first glance seems authoritarian but has a democratic spirit. This leadership style at first glance, is considered paradoxical because on the one hand it is authoritarian but on the other hand it also has a big soul (Syahriyah, 2023). meaning that decisions are not only from one side, but mutual agreement.

The positive response of Al-Khawarizmi pesantren residents from ustadz and ustadzah as well as the coordinators of santri / nuns related to how KH. C S in the decision-making process in the pesantren, he accommodates input, ideas, and views from his subordinates very well. He provided a polling session for his subordinates to express input regarding the problems faced and how to solve them, this was explained by Rois Am and Roisah Am of Al-Khawarizmi Islamic boarding school:

" Kiai C S involves all staff, including ustadz/ustadzah, teachers, and other residents, in decision-making for student development. This process fosters better Santri character and ensures good implementation. However, some decisions are solely decided by Kiai, such as holidays, financing, and development. ". (W.PKK-AKM.ROIS.PA.2).

The traits of a patriotic kiai who can rally his congregation to serve the greater good are on display here (Bakhri, 2020). The process of deliberation and participation of pesantren residents in decision-making related to KH. C S institutions, activities such as the beginning of the year meeting, PPDB meeting, Ramadan activity meeting, farewell meeting, pesantren curriculum and farewell meeting of santri / santriwati he did with pesantren stakeholders. This was stated by the ustadz and ustadzah of Al-Khawarizmi boarding school:

"The decision making carried out by KH. C S besides adhering to the deliberation process is also with the principle of participatory decision making, all important elements are involved in the formulation of decisions in several problems, in some problems he also sometimes only involves those closest to him. The decision-making process from searching for data, to selecting decisions/policies he did by involving important elements of the pesantren, he did this to produce good quality decisions/policies ". (W.PKK-AKM-UST.2).

The appreciation, openness and attitude of the kiai who prioritizes the deliberation process and the participation of all parties in the decision-making process came from senior officials of formal institutions at the Al-Khawarizmi pesantren, this was felt to have a positive impact on the development of the institution and of course became a hallmark of KH. Cici Suhendar's positive leadership in the eyes of senior officials of formal institutions in the Islamic Boarding School environment, this was described by the Head of the Elementary and Junior High School:

"Kiai Cici involves all pesantren residents, including teachers and ustadz-ustadzah, in decision-making processes for Al-Khawarizmi Islamic boarding school. This democratic figure ensures that policies are implemented and monitored for the benefit of all residents, demonstrating his democratic approach." (W.PKK-AKM-KS.SD.2).

"For example, in determining milad activities, he coordinated with the heads of junior high and elementary schools regarding the possibility of time so as not to interfere with the pesantren, and with the teachers so as not to interfere with the recitation time at the pesantren" (W.PKK-AKM-KS.SMP.2).

The benefits and quality of decisions or policies become the main focus of the participation process in decision making, so that in the end, in the implementation process, the decision can be accepted by all pesantren residents without rejection, because the decision-making process is carried out with the involvement of all elements of the pesantren and is based on the opinions and input of all pesantren residents.

3.7 Character Development of Students in the Leadership of Kiai at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City

Character education encompasses not only the socio-cultural roles played by families, schools, and communities, but also the cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor components of an individual's psychological make-up. Character is a set of norms for how one thinks and acts in relation to ethical issues. The development of one's character encompasses one's beliefs, understanding, awareness, drive, and connections to one's nation, one's self, other people, and the environment. Per Rohman and Muhid (2022). So, the kiai's role as head of his boarding school takes on great significance in this instance. because the direction the cart will go depends on him being the primary trigger or driver of the wheel.

Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School hosts monthly visits from scholars and experts from various regions and beyond to establish social connections with the *Kiai*. These visits motivate students to develop their moral character, and even representatives from the Indonesian National Armed Forces and National Police provide guidance. The *Kiai*, teachers, ustadz, and scholars act as catalysts for students to strive for better personalities. The school seeks assistance from influential individuals in both worldly and spiritual knowledge fields to encourage students to develop better character traits like responsibility, discipline, and tidiness. The *Kiai*'s approach to education does not involve violence, but students willingly follow etiquette towards the *Kiai*, ensuring their good conduct within the boarding school environment is carried over and emulated by other students. The *Kiai* holds absolute power and authority within the Islamic boarding school's life and environment.) (Dhofier, 2003). Character education in schools relies on exemplary behavior from principals, teachers, and dormitory caregivers. The principal's attitude and actions are crucial for the success of character education, as they influence daily behavior and attitudes. (Maryati, K. Suhandi, & Permana, 2020).

The pesantren emphasizes religious values, independence, and responsibility as essential character traits for daily life. At Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City, religious values are the primary focus, prioritizing character formation, mental attitudes, and teaching Islamic knowledge. The aim is to shape noble morals in Islamic generations and enhance students' faith in Allah swt. Furthermore, a good character is a reflection of pure faith. Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School employs various methods, including:

1. Utilizing the presence of visiting scholars and influential figures to motivate students and reinforce positive character traits.
2. Encouraging self-reflection and personal responsibility for character development.
3. Emphasizing respect and etiquette towards the *Kiai*, teachers, ustadz, and scholars as a form of character education.

4. Prioritizing religious values as the foundation for character development and instilling a strong sense of faith in the students.

Through these approaches, Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City aims to cultivate a generation of students with strong character, embodying the teachings of Islam in their daily lives.

Character education requires a systematic and gradual process or stages, in accordance with the phase of growth and development of students. Character is developed through the stages of knowledge (knowing), implementation (acting), and habits (habit). So character is not limited to knowledge alone, someone who has knowledge about goodness is not necessarily able to act according to what he knows, if he is not trained (habit) to do that goodness. This is the case with character, which reaches the area of emotions and habits. Character is an individual's nature in responding to situations in a moral manner. The nature of it is manifested through good behavior, honesty, responsibility, respect for others and other good character traits (Wibowo, 2017).

Islam emphasizes the importance of building good character, which reflects clean faith. Islamic educational institutions play an important role in character development, with the presence of Al-Khawarizmi pesantren, who apply several methods to foster and train good character. There are three methods applied at Al-Khawarizmi pesantren, among others;

1. The exemplary method, which is exemplified by Kiai Cici is a reflection of clean faith and encourages santri to follow in her footsteps.
2. The habituation method, such as prayer, fasting, and fasting, is also practiced at the Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School. These habits help students become more comfortable and sincere, which leads to better behavior.
3. The daily evaluation method, conducted by the asatidz and asatidzah, as well as advice from the kiai, is also conducted on Saturdays to ensure that the students feel reminded of their mistakes. thus these methods help the students develop good habits and foster a sense of cleanliness and integrity in their lives.

In line with research conducted by Mashur (2017), the type and role of kiai leadership, with the role of initiator, formulator, originator of development patterns and designer, curriculum compiler, while the type of leadership is Sufistic rational, charismatic and spiritual paternalistic. Second, the pattern of developing character-based education with a development pattern model that includes internal and external development patterns. Third, the method of character education with the teaching method (*At Ta'lim*), the habituation method (*At Ta'wiid*), and the *qudwah* method. Fourth, the inhibiting and supporting factors.

3.8 The Role of Kiai Leadership in Education within the Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung City

Along with the development of the industrial society, era 4.0 towards 5.0, the leadership role of kiai is very much needed to build an Islamic civilization with character. However, this does not eliminate or separate formal and non-formal education, but becomes a comprehensive correlation in producing millennial generations who are able to excel, compete, filter and provide solutions. So in this case changes are needed both related to attitudes, plans, and systems (Zulkifli & Khatami, 2022).

Pesantren have evolved from orphanages to formally recognized institutions, combining traditional and contemporary teachings. Transformational leadership has the potential to bring about significant change, moving from individualized Kiai leadership to a collective and transformative style. Traditionally, charismatic leadership has diminished, but people are now seeking a more rational leadership style in pesantren. KH. C S has implemented several changes at Pondok Pesantren Al-Khawarizmi, ensuring the organization continues to progress and adapt to the changing times, including;

1. **Institutional Status Change** When it was first established in 2005, Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School started as a simple religious institution (*diniyah takmiliah*) conducted in the modest home of Kiai Cici. The overwhelming response from the community led to the establishment of an orphanage for orphans and underprivileged children in 2007. Then, in 2014, it developed into an elementary school exclusively for orphaned and underprivileged students. Currently, the school has around 350 students, and the admission process is highly selective. In 2018, it transitioned into a formal Islamic boarding school known as Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School, which includes an affiliated junior high school (SMP IT) under the auspices of Ar-Rifqi Islamic Education Foundation.
2. **Changes in Teaching Methods at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School** KH. C S is an open-minded leader who is receptive to suggestions and innovations in teaching methods. Changes in teaching methods at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School are implemented after receiving input regarding the latest and most effective techniques for enhancing knowledge, such as rapid reading of the Qur'an and an in-depth understanding of Arabic grammar. While being adaptive to the suggestions received, KH. C S remains focused on a principle: "Preserve the good old traditions and embrace new traditions that are even better."
3. **Curriculum Changes in the Formal Education at the Boarding School** The development and improvement of Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School, in line with KH. C S's vision, have not been without challenges. The process has been dynamic and faced various obstacles, leading to the current state of the boarding school. In enhancing the quality of education, KH. C S focuses on curriculum development.

Kiai organizational change is driven by various factors as discussed by Jafar (2009, p 4) including; first, technological advances, human resource changes, economic changes, competition, regulatory compliance, and political factors. Second, Technological developments encourage the adoption of new, efficient work processes and tools, while human resources involve expertise, career development, and improved work culture. Third, Economic changes, competition, regulatory requirements, and political factors also contribute to the need for change. Fourth, Organizations must adapt to remain relevant and competitive in an ever-evolving environment.

All of these things put Kiai's changes into perspective and help to explain why they were necessary. Because of this, educators should be able to include more multimedia in the classroom, including audio, visual, and other forms of audiovisual learning, to help students internalise the values taught in character education and apply them in real life. Furthermore, educators have a responsibility to help their pupils develop admirable character traits (Widiyatmika, Sulisty, & Nugroho, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

The research reveals that Kiai C S's leadership has significantly impacted the character development of students at Al-Khawarizmi Islamic Boarding School in Bandung. His charismatic, democratic, and transformational style has fostered an inclusive and participatory environment within the pesantren community. By treating students as his own children and providing love and care, Kiai C S has fostered a sense of responsibility, independence, and deepened religious values. His various roles, including caregiver, advisor, educator, motivator, role model, facilitator, and coordinator, have led to significant positive changes in the school's education and character formation. However, the study's limitations include focusing solely on Kiai C S's leadership and its impact on character development. Further research could explore the perspectives of other stakeholders and compare leadership approaches with other Islamic boarding schools to understand the impact of the school's environment on character development. Overall, this research highlights the significance of Kiai C S's

leadership in enhancing students' character and serves as a foundation for future research to explore additional factors contributing to character development within the pesantren context.

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